

# NEW NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE TO ADVISE THE PRESIDING OFFICER  
WEDNESDAY 8 JULY 1998 AT 10.00 AM  
IN ROOM B4.20, BLOCK B, CASTLE BUILDINGS

**Present:**

- Lord Alderdice (Initial Presiding Officer)
- Mr M Durkan
- Mr R Empey
- Mr D Ervine
- Mr D Ford
- Mr A Maskey
- Mr E McGrady MP
- Prof M McWilliams
- Mr M Morrow
- Mr P Robinson MP
- Mr C Wilson
- Mr J Wilson

**In attendance:**

- Mr N Carson
- Miss A Moore

## 1. FUTURE BUSINESS OF THE NEW NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

The Initial Presiding Officer asked the Committee to consider how best to conduct future business of the Assembly, copies of some relevant House of Commons and House of Lords Business Papers were circulated by way of an example. The matter will be returned to at a later meeting.

## 2. COMMITTEE TO ADVISE THE PRESIDING OFFICER

The Initial Presiding Officer reported that he had consulted as far as possible with party leaders regarding party representation on the Committee. It was agreed that the Committee should meet in its present form. Members indicated they were content the Committee should consist of 2 representatives from each of the 4 largest parties, one representative from each of the other parties plus a representative of the 3 independents.

**Agreed:** Copies of notices and minutes of meetings to be copied to Whips.

3. **BUSINESS DIARY**

The Initial Presiding Officer reported that in order for services to be provided it is the intention of the Secretariat to establish a Business Diary. Agreed the Business Diary should be circulated to Whips and that it would be useful if parties could inform Secretariat of party meetings, etc, in order that Secretariat might ensure the necessary services are provided.

4. **PRESS AND MEDIA ISSUES**

The Committee discussed press and media facilities. The Initial Presiding Officer reported that he had identified rooms in the basement of Parliament Buildings with a direct route from the Gallery which might be converted into a press bar (for press, Members and senior officials), working space with lockers for accredited journalists and 3 or 4 studios. The Initial Presiding Officer undertook to establish the needs and requirements of the press and to produce a paper giving the options and draft guidelines for consideration by the Committee.

5. **ACCOMMODATION**

**Second Floor:** A plan of the proposed temporary accommodation on the second floor of Parliament Buildings was circulated. Members indicated they were unhappy about the accommodation provided which they felt was inadequate. The Initial Presiding Officer undertook to speak with the Secretary of State with a view to having all NI Civil Servants not vital to the Assembly moved out and sufficient appropriate accommodation allocated to Members by September.

**Assembly Chamber:** A plan of the proposed layout of the Chamber was discussed briefly.

6. **EMERGENCY MEETING**

A proposal by Mr C Wilson that the Committee ask the Secretary of State to call an emergency meeting of the New Assembly to allow Members to debate the Garvaghy Road situation was discussed. Not agreed.

7. **PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

The Committee adjourned to Parliament Buildings to view the accommodation.

**Agreed:** The layout of the Chamber giving 3 tiered rows of seating with desks provided for the front 2 rows.

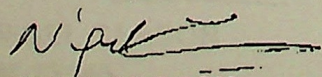
Desks to be constructed in walnut finish picking out some of the detail from the panelling in the Chamber.

Upholstery to match existing colour scheme.

Microphones to be individually controlled by Members.

Computer graphics to be prepared if possible by the end of the week.

Accommodation for press and media.

  
**NIGEL CARSON**  
Deputy Clerk (Business)

FROM: NIGEL CARSON  
ASSEMBLY SECRETARIAT  
DATE: 9 JULY 1998

CC: Presiding Officer

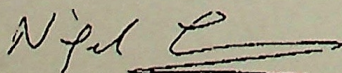
Mr R Empey  
Mr J Wilson  
Mr E McGrady MP  
Mr M Durkan  
Mr M Morrow  
Mr P Robinson MP  
Mr A Maskey  
Mr D Ford  
Mr C Wilson  
Prof M McWilliams  
Mr B Hutchinson

COMMITTEE TO ADVISE THE PRESIDING OFFICER

This is to advise you that the next meeting of the Committee to Advise the Presiding Officer will be held on Thursday 16 July at 9.30 am, venue to be confirmed.

AGENDA

1. Assembly Chamber
2. Accommodation Matters
3. Official Report/Minutes of Proceedings/Future Business
4. Meeting with Press
5. Passes for Members' Staff
6. Any other Business



NIGEL CARSON  
☎ 23146